

Mackay North State High School Lest We Forget Commemorative Project

Mackay North High's Lest We Forget Project is an on-going project of commemoration undertaken by Senior History students at the school.

The aim of the project is to commemorate and further publicise the sacrifices made by Australians in war and to make practical and respectful tributes to those Australians who have died for our country.

The project revolves around overseas pilgrimages to the battlefields, cemeteries and memorials where Australians have fought and died. These tours involve the search for individual graves and names and the honouring of these fallen soldiers on behalf of relatives in Australia. Photographs of the graves and names are taken and presented to relatives on each group's return.

The school has so far undertaken 7 commemorative tours - in 1999, 2002, 2004, 2006, 2008, 2010 & 2012. In that time 181 students have travelled to Gallipoli, the Somme and Flanders, Thailand and Singapore and have honoured 669 men and 33 nurses buried or commemorated in these areas.

*"My final thoughts as I watched the silent headstones was that we have to live the life these soldiers gave us we have to live our lives to the fullest, love our friends and family to the utmost.
It's the least we can do - live the life that these men never got."*



For more information on the Lest We Forget Project

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The Lest We Forget Project



Securing our future by respecting our past

Mackay North State High School

Footsteps of Honour

2012

Commemorative Tour

Street Memorial Project



Dear Penn St Resident

Our names are Maddi Luck and Tess Dougherty and we are members of the Mackay North SHS Footsteps of Honour 2012 Tour Group.

This year, our group embarked on a 3 week overseas pilgrimage to the past Australian battlefields, cemeteries and memorials of Gallipoli, France, Belgium and Singapore.

One aspect of our research and commemoration centred around undertaking a local history study of Mackay streets which were named in honour of fallen Mackay soldiers.

In pairs, we all 'adopted' a street and the relevant soldier and, in the lead up to the tour, we researched the war service of "our" soldiers and learnt about the circumstances surrounding each man's death.

On the tour, we visited the graves or the memorials where each of these soldiers is buried or commemorated. At each site, we undertook a service which included the delivery of a eulogy, a recital of The Ode and the observance of a minute silence. We then photographed the grave or memorial name to bring this record back to Mackay.

We were honoured to have researched and commemorated the soldier after whom Penn St is named. So as to provide you with a little history of your street, please find over information related to the soldier. We hope you find it interesting.

Penn St, Mackay

Named in honour of:
Lance Corporal Charles Penn
Service No. 6695

1st Battalion Queens Own Royal West Kent Regiment
Killed in Action in Belgium on 8 March 1915
Aged 29



Charles was born in England to parents Thomas and Maria Penn and came to Australia in 1907 with his family, which settled in Finch Hatton.

He had served in the Queen's Own reserves in England and, at the outbreak of the war, was called back to his unit along with his brother.

The brothers left Australia in late 1914 Charles & was killed in action on 8 March, 1915 as his unit held trenches just east of Ieper. It was a quiet time so the most likely cause of Charles' death was sniper fire or shellfire.

Charles was buried in Tuileries British Cemetery which was subsequently destroyed by shellfire and many of the graves lost. As such, Charles' headstone is marked, "Known to be Buried in this Cemetery".

The Penn Family had had their own small theatrical company in England, and when the boys had gone, Mr and Mrs Penn devised fund-raising theatricals at Finch Hatton. After WW1, they kept these going and continued to raise funds for Returned Soldiers.



Tuileries British Cemetery is located in the Belgian village of Zillbeke and is situated on the old 1915 front lines that surrounded the nearby town of Ieper (Ypres). A number of British soldiers were buried there during the war but many of these graves were destroyed by shellfire. The cemetery was expanded after the war and today it contains 95 burials and commemorations. Only 26 of the graves are known. Charles, whose headstone is situated at Special Memorial E. 23, was one whose marked grave was destroyed by shellfire. Therefore, his headstone is marked "Known to be Buried in this Cemetery."

Charles' Commemoration

We were honoured to commemorate Charles at a special gravesite service at Tuileries British Cemetery on 27 September this year during our overseas pilgrimage.



Tess (left) and Maddi at Charles' grave.